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wherein said reinforcing member is positioned rearwardly of a shaft connecting portion of said head by a first distance that is in a range of $\pm 20\%$ of a second distance extending between said face on the front and said rearmost side of the head, said first distance being measured from a reference position that is half the second distance between the face on the front and the rearmost side of the head .

REMARKS

The cross-reference to the related application has been updated by the Amendment.

Applicant also hereby submits remarks in response to the Examiner's comments, comparing the present invention with the references cited by the Examiner.

The Examiner rejected the claims 1-7 as being unpatentable over Lu in view of Lundberg. The Applicant, therefore, has amended the claim 1 to incorporate the subject matter claim 2 thereinto, while claim 2 has been cancelled without prejudice. This subject matter has been edited for clarity and antecedents have been provided for all elements recited in the claim.

The claim now recites the limitation wherein said reinforcing member is positioned rearwardly of a shaft connecting portion of said head by a first distance that is in a range of $\pm 20\%$ of a second distance extending between said face on the front and said rearmost side of the head, said first distance being measured from a reference position that is half the second distance between the face on the front and the rearmost side of the head .

According to the construction of the amended claim 1, the deformation of the body of the head that may be caused at the time of striking a ball can be prevented in a most effective and reliable manner.

It is strongly believed that such construction is neither disclosed nor suggested by any of the cited prior art references, and thus the present invention does involve an inventive step.

In the meantime, as the Examiner pointed it out, Lu does disclose a gap of 0.001-0.3 inch between the face plate and the reinforcing element 16. In view of the fact that a distance defined from a face to a rearmost side of a golf club head is about 4 inches in general, it is self-evident that the structure of the present invention featured by the above recitation that "wherein said reinforcing member is positioned rearwardly of a shaft connecting portion of said head by a first distance that is in a range of $\pm 20\%$ of a second distance extending between said face on the front and said rearmost side of the head, said first distance being measured from a reference position that is half the second distance between the face on the front and the rearmost side of the head" is totally different from that of Lu.

In other words, if the distance from the face to the rearmost side of golf club head is 4 inches, then the reinforcing member must be provided in a range of 1.2 to 2.8 inches away from the face, while the numerical value "0.001 to 0.3 inch" disclosed by Lu considerably deviates from this range. Further, according to the structure disclosed by Lu, the reinforcing element 16 is integrated with a back plate member 32 of a complicated structure, thus leading to an increase of manufacturing costs due to such a complicated structure.

According to the invention, however, it is possible to reliably prevent the deformation of a body of a club head that may be caused at the time of striking a ball, despite such a simple structure that the reinforcing member is tabular, thus reducing the manufacturing costs.

Referring to Lundberg, the frame-shaped reinforcing rib disclosed by Lundberg is contacted by the face, so that the deformation of the face is hindered when striking a ball. Accordingly, the elastic force caused by the deformation of a head cannot be used for increasing an initial velocity of a ball. Furthermore, whilst the reinforcing member of the invention is tabular, the reinforcing rib of Lundberg is formed by combining a plurality of stick-like members, indicating that the invention disclosed by Lundberg is totally different from the present invention in respect of object and constriction of an invention.

In the meantime, regarding the objection to the drawings, Applicant would like to call it to the Examiner attention that there *is* a written description of the reference sign (19) in the specification (please see paragraph [0024] such that "The aforesaid having an opening 19 in the center thereof".

Also, regarding the description of a "second body shell member", Applicant also would like to call it to the Examiner's attention that there *is* a written description of the description of a "second body shell member" in the specification (please see paragraph [0033] such that "a first body shell member 17b.....and a second body shell member 17b....."

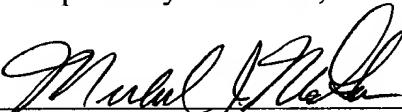
Claims 3-7 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as amended claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the Amendment and Remarks, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. Claims 1 and 3-7 are now pending and a Notice of Allowance for these claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amended Paragraphs and Claims with Changes Marked

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

[0001] (Amended) This application is a continuation-in-part application of U.S. Appl. No. 09/395,664 filed on September 14, 1999, [now pending] formerly co-pending and now abandoned.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claim 1 as follows:

1. (Amended) A wood golf club which comprises:

a head having a face on a front, said head defining a toe at one end of the face and a heel at the other end thereof, having an outer shell made of metallic shells, defining a hollow interior, said head also having a rearmost side opposite the face on the front;

a shaft connected to a heel side of the head; and

one or more reinforcing members provided separately inside said outer shell of the head, each of said reinforcing members being tabular, projecting toward the hollow interior, so formed that it is provided nearly along a cross-sectional area of said hollow interior defined in a toe-to-heel direction, a preset distance away from the face to define a preset space therebetween,

wherein each reinforcing member is frame-shaped and makes up 20% or more of the cross-sectional area of the hollow interior in a toe-to-heel direction, and

wherein said reinforcing member is positioned rearwardly of a shaft connecting portion of said head by a first distance that is in a range of $\pm 20\%$ of a second distance extending between said face on the front and said rearmost side of the head, said first distance being measured from a reference position that is half the second distance between the face on the front and the rearmost side of the head .